314 strips of rattan palm. Both frames are drawn through holes made
342 with an awl (nsŏn), Figure 174, c; they are sewn on with fine
91 palm bands. In the next section I shall speak of the patterns.

314 To obtain bark for houses and decoration a whole number of
445 trees are available, as we have seen. On the other hand, containers
322 -- at least in the southern region -- are made from the bark of only a single tree, a Tiliacea (ekɔ́b). They are carefully worked, and when new they look very nice because of their even yellow-gray color which later, as a result of the smoke in the hut and through age, becomes dark brown to black. They are manufactured in the following manner. The requisite piece of bark is cut off to the desired size, and its outermost layer is scorched over the fire so that it can be scraped *off with a knife*. It is then bent into the shape of a cylinder so that the edges lie over one another in a narrow strip. The edges are clamped between the halves of a stick that has been split down the middle, the halves being pressed together again at the top and bottom by means of a string. At this point the edges are sewn one on top of the other with two seams. The stitching is done with palm bands, for which holes are made with an awl. The projecting edge is cut off. The lid consists of a hoop similarly constructed from the same bark and a plate made of the wood of the umbrella tree, which is also used for the bottom of the vessel.

445 Bark containers of all sizes are manufactured, from the most
761 charming little boxes to the gigantic barrel. In one respect,
● however, they are identical, that is, only important things are kept in them, such as the poisoned arrows for the crossbow, skulls of ancestors, and, above all, medicines, in short, all things /207/ connected with death; hence they are called nsɔ́k I (1), since

> 1. In addition, we find nkɔ́b I from which is derived the name of the tree, ekɔ́b.

n-sŏ-k -- derived from n-so-ak -- contains the root sŏ which designates death in the religious sense. Thus, one puts something associated with death (sŏ) in the bark container (action is involved

since they first sought a container, e.g., for the skull of the dead, in order to preserve it; hence, the suffix aka). A bark vessel is also, as it were, the grave (n-so-n), for the body of the dead person lies in it in a trough made of bark, which sometimes is closed off with a lid of the same material (passive, since first the place where the body happened to be lying, whether in the house or out in the open, n sóń, was named; hence, the passive suffix ń).

(b) Bark cloth.

Bark is made into cloth by pounding it with a beater (Fig. 159) made from the end of an elephant's tooth (d), half an elephant's rib (b, c), the horn of a white-backed duikerbok Cephalophus longiceps Gray (mvũ IV), or the wood of the Leguminosa Eurypetalum tessmannii Harms (andzĭtsíd) (a). For this purpose, they do not take the wood of a freshly cut trunk, but rather the harder red wood /Fig. 158 appears here in the original text/ of old trees that have been felled a long time ago. The wooden beater has about the same shape as the mallets used by our carpenters and consists of a straight handle with a roller-shaped head which is grooved around half or all of its circumference.

The only suitable bark for bark cloth is that of fig trees (etõ'b = fig tree [Ficus] and cloth, clothing) (2). /208/

2. The following varieties are used in the Pangwe region:
Ficus globicarpa Warb. var. (emblõ'ń);
Ficus cfr. wildemaniana Warb. (adzĭb-etõb);
Ficus bubu Warb. (akõ'-etõb);
Ficus stellulata Warb. (etĭtõ, root to(b) reduplicated);
Ficus preussii Warb. and laurentii Warb. (etõ'b, etõ'b-o-jõb, ejĕ'I, akĭm);
Ficus barteri Sprague (asĭmentũmo Fang, asĭmentũ'me Ntum);

776 The evil evur concerns itself only with eating people in the course of the ngwel and with waging war against the good bivur. It is almost always the evil evur which is the victor.

(3) Activities of the evur. The manifestations of the evur are many, and itis the evur which acts in everything instead of, and in place of, its owner.

It is essential for one who wishes to be a practitioner to have an evur. Moreover, this profession is assigned to a child, should the occasion arise, at the time of the ceremony of akaga.

Except in the case of an activity favorable to its owner, or at the time of the akaga, the evur is always malevolent. The only aim of the ngwel meetings is to assure the life of the bivur through the death of the persons whom they eat.

776 When the good evur of a nem has worked in full daylight for its
155 owner, the latter falls ill at the same time as his evur. He can be
824 treated only with a thick medication made of water, a cooked egg, and crushed leaves of ebele beyem. Ebele beyem is the name of a poisonous vine whose leaves and blossoms resemble those of the sweet potato.

776 The malevolent activity of the evur is always manifested in a death.
761 It may also be the cause of abortion, or the death of a newborn the moment it sees daylight.

776 The evur also allows its possessor to change himself into an animal.
762 For example, a man who wishes to die causes his evur to go out and
158 take the form of an animal (usually a black antelope, nzip, or a red antelope, nkog), and to walk at the edge of the village. The animal is noticed at once by the inhabitants who hunt and kill it. The evur then immediately returns to the man who sent it, and it is the man who is killed instead of the animal. The transformation is simultaneous with the blow which causes death, and it is the man, transported by his evur, who is found dead at the spot where the animal fell. [73]

776 An example of this faculty of transformation was reported to us in
158 March, 1934. Two hunters landed on a small island in Lake Mangueigne to hunt a monkey which they had seen in a tree. They separated at the landing spot, after having decided that each should go around the island from his side. One of them saw a large black antelope in the thickets, fired, and when he drew near found his comrade riddled with shot, gasping his last and dying shortly afterwards. The inhabitants of the neighboring village, aroused by the cries, arrived in time to hear

844 see it, and if she sees it she will have no more children. The mother is then washed with very hot water in which pimento has been steeped; after this her abdomen is bound with a belt of bark (ewag) which she keeps on for several days.

846 After the birth of her child, a young mother is known by the name of nzinze, which she keeps until she has the right to resume relations with her husband. She has a special bed in the hut, on which a [844] menstruating woman may neither sit nor lie so as not to give scabies to the mother and the newborn. The young mother rests for about three months, during which she does no work and bathes every day with water as hot as she can stand, the lumbar region especially being [751] bathed. Moreover, after every bath she is smeared with red paste (ba) to prevent scabies.

Recovery from childbirth is marked by a celebration (okula mon). The first time she goes out, the woman carries a package of ba, a piece of which she places on every tree stump she meets on her way, to mark her path. On her return she prepares a large quantity of food she has brought back. The husband invites the men of his tribe, and the wife invites the women of her husband's tribe. When the food is ready, it is taken to the men in the watchers' hut, where the child is also taken. The women eat in the hut.

846 827 757 To improve the quality of her milk, the young mother drinks progressively, if necessary, three medicines:

(1) An infusion of aseh roots.

(2) A milky-looking infusion of pieces of tubers of a plant with a thorny stem (ekon bõkun).

(3) Latex from a rubber plant.

● 761 789 It may be that the child dies at birth. Three causes for this are recognized:

An evur has eaten the child. To prevent this from being repeated and so that the woman will in the future bring living children into the world, she resorts to the practitioner. He goes into the forest armed [83] with a machete and a basket. He gathers the bark of an ovañ, and also brush and vines that grow under this tree. On his return to the village he divides his collection into two parts. One part, mixed with water, is put in a large rectangular container of banana leaves called etok, which has been filled with the blood of a domestic animal sacrificed for the welfare of the woman. She then immerses herself

761 in the etok and stays there for a certain length of time. While she is
789 in this bath, she eats a soup made of the rest of the bark gathered by the practitioner, together with a pumpkin, a piece of the heart, liver, and some blood of the sacrificial animal, all cooked in a pot. This remedy is intended to satisfy the evur and prevent it from eating the blood of the woman or of the child which she may carry in her womb in the future.

761 The death of the child may also arise from an akaga given to its mother, which predicted that one of her children would not live.

761 Finally, if there is neither evur nor akaga, this mishap is believed
784 to be caused by the violation of a prohibition or, more likely, by
837 adultery committed by the woman during her pregnancy. To make her denounce her accomplice, she is beaten until she has named him. This man must then pay to the husband an indemnity equal to half the dowry which he spent to get his wife, an indemnity which represents the price of the adultery and the price of the child's corpse. The woman is subjected from then on to the prohibition of awos until the the birth of her next child.

854 The child (mon). Until it talks, the child is called nkaṅele. We We have seen that after its birth it is washed in cold water and not fed until the following morning. The breast is first given it by another woman rather than by the mother, whose milk is not good at first.

At the age of eight days, the child is smeared with ba. If the cord dries up by itself without trouble, it is enough to moisten it with saliva.

845 Anomalies such as the birth of an albino or of twins are considered
[143] normal. The natives have stated that albinos are reproduced in the same family at an interval of three generations. As to twins, they are
[55?] forbidden later on to take part in the ngwel. If the twins are boys, the first is called Nzugo, the second Dzima; if they are girls, they are given the names respectively of Bela and Nzua.

551 A name is not given a child until several months after birth, when one is almost certain that it will live. A child receives several names. The father chooses the first name from among his ancestors. For example, a boy will be called Osene from the name of a paternal ancestor, to this name of Osene has been added the name of his father Ekomi, and so the child is called Osene Ekomi; but he also has a sort of first name chosen by the parents, which in the present case is [84] Andzang. The complete name thus is Andzang Osene Ekomi. The mother's

613 the same for the third grandson. The group of the sons' three families
614 constitutes what is called etuha or aval. The tribe (ayoh) gives its name to all the families which have been established since its founder.

614 Social relations are rare with foreign tribes, the tribe forming a
609 homogeneous whole where the stranger is received only with reserve
578 and when he shows goods which prove that his visit has no other aim but to come and look for a woman to marry. The [92] tribes are often hostile to one another, and while they no longer can make war, this hostility is still demonstrated by an atmosphere of haggling which always forces the weakest to give way. Several tribes have thus had to leave the N'Djolé region to settle farther downstream on the Ogooué because they could no longer live beside their neighbors.

574 On the other hand, visits among members of one tribe are frequent, presents are exchanged, and wives are bought.

761 Death (awu). Death is regarded as a change of village. After his
715 death, a person has become an inhabitant of the big village created by Nzame beyond the earth. There he will find the members of his family who already live there, and therefore he follows a very wide trail which leads him to the bank of the river Endam where his relatives who died before him come to await him. It may be that the crossing of the river is not immediate, and the dead man may have to stay for several days on the bank, which happens especially to people of whom the bivur have made human victims.

763 The dying person (edzeĝela) is attended by women who, when death has occurred, announce it on coming out of the hut, where all the inhabitants of the village then assemble. The corpse is taken from its bed and laid on the ground on mats; it is washed, rubbed with oil, and clothed in a white loincloth, then rolled in the mats and in pieces of bark, and tied. It stays this way in the hut until the grave is dug.

764 Funeral ceremonies immediately follow death. The wrapped body is carried by two men to the place of burial. The inhabitants of the village follow, one behind the other, and are present at the interment, which is done with a vine holding the body so that it does not fall suddenly to the bottom of the hole dug to receive it. The grave is oriented east-west, or is dug parallel to the course of the river which flows by the village, the head of the dead being placed upstream or to the east, the feet downstream or toward the west, so that the dead will lie in the direction of the river Endam. Before the grave is filled,

road. The missions have tried, with unequal results, to ameliorate the fate of old people without children; certain clan "societies" have also been active in this direction, but none of it goes very far. Moreover, the old people accept their lot and occasionally joke about it among themselves with the rather biting irony that seems one of the mental characteristics of the group. Some old people kill themselves "from being tired of life." According to Trilles, some used to burn themselves to death voluntarily. According to Largeau, the heirs took the initiative in this so as to make the inheritance available.

The least wretched old people are those with children, particularly sons (1), since daughters usually live with their affinal family. There

1. Cf. Eza Boto, Ville cruelle (no. 182), for an illustration of relations between mother and son.

does exist a genuine obligation for children to provide parents with food, which is sanctioned by paternal or maternal curse in case of default.

f. Death and the Afterlife

Every death is suspect, but that of a nya mɔ̀tɔ̂ more than another, because a nya mɔ̀tɔ̂ does not die: someone kills him, though it may be none other than himself. Therefore the death of a man of some importance was always followed by an autopsy: the ngengañ would cut open the body and examine the thoracic organs, nlem, the seat of intellect and will, to look for signs of sorcery, the work either of another or of the dead man should his évu have turned against him or been filled by a malignant agency. There also appears to have been a magic process, éwɔ̀mɔ̂lɔ̂, that revived the dead long enough to put questions concerning the cause of death.

If the autopsy revealed that the deceased was a sorcerer, nnem, the body was burned or thrown into a large river or perhaps buried at a crossroads far from the village. If he were mie, free of évu, the regular mortuary rites ensued. The body was washed in warm water, massaged and softened, then rubbed with baa dissolved in palm oil, wrapped in a white loincloth, watched over by armed men while the grave was made ready and the relatives /102/ and affinal kin /alliés/

177 764 Obviously this has now changed, but perhaps not so much as one would imagine: every year the courts are aware of several ordeals after a death, of mutilations of corpses which are really autopsies, of sums of money extorted which are customary compensation payments imposed on the "person responsible" for a death. And we may assume that in this connection three-quarters of the cases never reach the European courts. Funeral rites have, however, been lightened and colored by Christian influence, even when the deceased had remained to the end attached to the old beliefs: his wives or children usually call in a nkat foé (news-announcer = catechist) to say the prayers for the dead and to sing psalms or hymns. The old-fashioned cylindrical bark litter has been replaced by a European plank coffin, gradually even for women and children. The graves of the well-to-do have masonry walls and are covered with a concrete slab bearing name, date of death, and a pious text, or even with a small flower bed framed with bricks or bottle necks, with a grave stone or cross at the head. The dead man's hut is no longer destroyed, especially if made of "solid" material, nor are his personal effects broken. Often the body is washed and dressed in European clothes instead of being anointed with baa; the white shroud remains. In Christian families women take part in wakes for men and attend their burials; men attend the burials of women but rarely take part in their wakes. In [795] /104/ many villages the different /Christian/ sects have separate cemeteries.

765 177 Mourning is less rigorous and is often expressed by the European black arm band and tie worn by men. In the villages widows are still rather ill-treated (cf. above, pp. 128-129), but their sequestration has been reduced to a week, and they are allowed to wash after a month or two. Most of the prohibitions of the mourning period have fallen out of use, and the end of mourning is marked by a family gathering which has more about it of a certain kind of French provincial New Year's Eve party than of the old purificatory rites.

• 761 Death in the traditional concept is not so much the cessation of life as the dissociation of the personality. Enyiñ, life, comes from the verb nyiñ meaning "to survive" rather than "to be alive"; /thus life represents/ a kind of dynamism opposed to the static to, tabe = to be, exist, remain, etc.

826 774 The body, nyul or nyôl, is perishable and corruptible; it supports the other elements of the personality, above all the nsisim or nsisiñ,

551 of his descendants, in whose person he will be repeated rather than reembodied. It should be remembered that jôé also means "authority," a notion that cannot be dissociated from that of name.

761 The cessation of vital functions, awu (from wu, to die), is not
625 thought of as necessarily final: catalepsy, deep coma, anaesthesia, and real death are confused. It is evident that if the body is hurt during awu, a revival is impossible. A ghost, kôn (Fang, khun), is
754 not necessarily physically dead: one of the most feared forms of
828 sorcery, at which the Ndôn are reputed to be particularly expert, consists of separating a person from his nsisim, shade or double, by giving him the appearance of physical death, then in awakening the body which will thereafter automatically obey the sorcerer's orders and may be used by him for all sorts of ends, to go kill or steal, or, more prosaically, to work his plantations. Persons thus transformed into bekôn are recognized by their pallor, jerky movements, and haggard expression; they survive the experience /operation/ for only a few months before dying in great physical and moral agony (1).

1. I have reason—but no proof—to believe that this is more than a myth: perhaps the criminal use of a narcotic producing effects similar to those of Pentothal. A kôn, frightful to see, died at the Sangmélima dispensary in 1947. The judicial inquiry revealed nothing.

[276]

761 Death in the complete sense does not occur for some time after the cessation of vital functions, and funeral rites seem to have had the purpose of detaching the individual from his mortal shell. There
765 were two abodes of the dead. The bemie, those unblemished by ngbwel (sorcery by évu), crossed the river-of-the-west or the sea to go to the village of Zâmbe (Zobeyo, Nzame) in a cold country where their nsisim led a life rather like that in a terrestrial village where everything goes well (2). The beyem went down to éndôlan, the

2. According to Trilles, this would have been Venus, otya alu, "the night's torch."

du Dja region during the same period. This incarnation is probably related to the totemism or the alliance between a man and an animal élañela, which Trilles discusses at length (no. 166). The incarnation is only temporary and ends at the death or disappearance of the animal.

As a result of mission influence, niam bekon, the land of the dead, is now divided into heaven and hell, which are none other than Zambe's village and émôbian. Souls in purgatory seem to be confused in village minds with dissatisfied bekôn, who are always disturbing. The notion of natural death, brought about neither by sorcery nor by breaking a prohibition, has not developed at all: after all, "the wages of sin is death," and "sin" has been rendered as nsem in translations of the Scriptures. Therefore the dead continue to belong to society, even though the decline of the ancestor cult, the biéti, and of the initiations with a probable totemic character like só, have weakened their bonds with the living.

This belief in survival perhaps explains a certain scorn of death, which is indicated not only by bravery in war and the suicides of the old, but also suicides for the sake of a point of honor: a woman kills herself in order to take revenge on her husband, a man because he considers himself offended or injured. The "one responsible" for such a suicide is severely judged by public opinion, and must pay compensation and make an expiratory sacrifice.

3. Religion and Magic

Aside from a few old people who are known as "children of the old ways" (or "of the old knowledge"), bo' biyem bi nnom, and who are treated as pagans by their children, and, even more uncommon, a few /107/ young people who declare themselves to be agnostics, the great majority if not the mass of contemporary Pahouin claim to be attached to one of the sects that has done evangelical work in the region: French or American Presbyterian, /Roman/ Catholic, /Seventh Day/ Adventist. In fact, and with no intention of arguing over the statistics that give proportions of 105 percent "Christian" in certain districts, the influence of Christianity is indeed considerable, but it is tinged with animist survivals and revivals to an extent and in ways that only a great deal of detailed research could present accurately.

266 Boulou and Ntoumou, who often fought the Fang, do not accuse them of cannibalism, which seems to prove that this /practice/ was restricted to "foreign" wars, to conquests. Intestinal cannibalism was held in horror and practiced only by sorcerers, often called bedi bôt, man-eaters. Di nlem, usually translated as "soul eating," means literally "to eat the thoracic organs" and may be applied to outright material consumption of these internal organs. On the other hand, the anthropophagy or "necropophagy" that might be qualified as homeopathic, which consists of swallowing in a biañ (mbiañ) a tiny amount, often as ash, of an ancestor's or an initiate's body, has nothing criminal about it and apparently used to be part of all important rites. /113/ From this point of view, the communion meal of the body of the sô, if this rite is truly totemic, represented perhaps manducation of the ancestor.

As for gastronomic cannibalism, it is a story for the picture papers. Not only man's flesh but even that of anthropoids, aside from the cases mentioned above, is absolutely taboo /the plural bityi is used here. —Tr./, and accidental consumption or consumption enforced by absolute necessity (for instance, if hunters are marooned by a flood) entails rigorous purification.

c. Elements of Cosmogony

772 803 Our knowledge of the traditional world view is largely conjectural too, for the reasons already pointed out. We may state with reasonable certainty two fundamental concepts:

Orientation of space and time referred to the apparent movement of the sun; perhaps it would be better to speak of space-time, as the two ideas are closely connected.

The principle described by Stoll as "double symmetry," which could also be called "sexual complementarity" and summed up as the equilibrium in tension of all elements of the universe /création/.

These two concepts are, as things stand, tied together if not inseparable.

Time and space flow from east to west in a declining movement. East is ôku, upstream, high, and male; west, nke, is downstream, low, and female. The earth, si, is surrounded by water, or rather, enclosed by water and darkness, /thus/, ndim = blind; mendim =

779 that would be against totemic law and would mean sacrilege.
721 In order to avoid this ritual offense, which would necessitate ex-
782 piation and would necessitate expiation and would furthermore wipe out all the efficacy of the sacrifice, the chief first of all approaches [551] the victim, and asks his name, race, and tribe. Is there no obstacle to the sacrifice? "A ne mvè," he cries, "a ne nwuba (he is good, he is 'dedicated')!" The man is then tied to the foot of the altar and very rarely does he re-
●[76] sist. All Africans resign themselves to death with almost unconscious ease, when they see that it is inevitable. (1)

1. In certain villages I have sometimes met such men destined for sacrifice, because they are often kept for many weeks. They walked around in the villages, apparently free, well fed, and well treated; the only sign of their captivity was a rather light block of wood well fastened to one of their feet, which they dragged along. Within the village this shackle was not much of an encumbrance, but in the forest it would have been an almost insurmountable obstacle to flight. Countless times, I have offered either to help them escape or to have the colonial authority free them. "What for?" they used to reply; "I'm well fed and treated; death is going to come anyway. Awu nzu mbèmbè! (What's the use!)"

So as to prevent any possible struggle, the evening before,
[276] the victim is given an intoxicating beverage, containing mostly
779 the juice of ebè and of yam (hemp). As soon as he has been
721 tied to the altar, and the chief has pronounced the ritual words,
782 the warriors start putting on their war dress. First they paint
302 their bodies red with baza (1) dye, and upon this first layer they
386

1. Pterocarpus angolensis: the wood is

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

places where they are going to build these respectively), large bush rat, porcupine, squirrels, die in the traps; deer, gazelle, antelope, large deer and pigs die in the pitfalls. The animals which die in the *olam* are these. This is the *olam*.

XVII.—*Burials.*

Death is never considered as due to natural causes. Disease followed by death is due to *evus* (witch). It is not considered unlucky to attend a dying person. The body is usually left in the house until burial. Embalming is not practised. Mourners smear white clay on their bodies and wear necklaces of pineapple fibre for one moon (month). A coffin is not used and the body is buried in the sitting posture. After burial the grave is levelled off as is the case almost throughout West Africa; the only difference between the burial of a headman and a common man is in the amount of visitors and mourning, and the quarrelling over his goods. Wives of a dead headman remain in mourning from one to three moons (months). The witch doctor, *nganga*, usually performs a post mortem to find the witch. I attended a post mortem on an old woman. The witch doctor ripped open the abdomen with an old rusty knife, grasped and cut away the uterus and holding it up to the crowd declared "Six witches!" The crowd passed the word "six witches," and spoke the praises of the witch doctor. Relations usually continue to mourn or wail for one moon while inside the house or at work in the gardens. The most common wail is *Ó nan Ó! Ó tat Ó!* (Oh mother! Oh father!).

XVIII.—*Akóm.*

This is a dance. It is not *biang* (medicine) nor is it *eki*. It is, however, practised by men only. The women must not see it. The latter stay within doors, and only hear the words which the men speak outside. The men speak with artificial voices, so that the women cannot recognise who it is that is speaking. (*Fam a kobo ne kiñ zie nkót.*) To make the artificial sounds they use a membrane (*ten*) which encloses the young of the spider (*ndenbóa*). This they spread over a hole (about ¾ inch diameter) near the small end of an elephant tusk (*mbang nzok*) from 1 to 2½ feet in length, attaching it with beeswax (*abĕ*) or a liquid which is obtained from a plantain stalk fresh cut. This juice is called *akirl*. It possesses an adhesive property. The man blows on the large end of the ivory. A curious sound then issues through the membrane so that the man's voice cannot be recognised. This instrument is called *mbang akóm*. The act of playing on the instrument is called *e kobe akóm* (*e kobe*, talk). The performer sings songs; the words are distinctly heard. He sings and all others sing responsively (*a ye bo'beseyem b'aka*).

Many songs are used in *akóm*. Here are three specimens of them:—

(1) *Benza b'abete kobo? Beso benga wog mvé.* Who speaks any more? (*i.e.*, Be silent, let no one speak.) Others are listening with pleasure (*i.e.*, to the performance).